

November 4, 2009

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The meeting will address the recently announced FDA proposal to ban Gulf Coast oysters unless post-harvest processing is implemented. Sen. Landrieu and Rep. Melancon have been outspoken opponents of this potential regulation, which will be detrimental to the Gulf Coast oyster industry and many coastal communities throughout the South.

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"This FDA regulation would have a devastating impact on thousands of oyster producers and Louisiana restaurants who market themselves based on the popularity of Gulf Coast oysters," Sen. Landrieu said. "Tuesday's meeting is an important first step to reversing this short-sighted regulation, and I will continue to work with Rep. Melancon and other elected officials to find a better solution that protects the public and the livelihoods of mom-and-pop oyster dealers along the Gulf Coast."

"Louisianians have united in outrage against this proposed ban on fresh Gulf oysters, and the FDA will hear our voice next Tuesday," said Rep. Melancon. "This ban would be devastating for Louisiana's oyster and restaurant industries, and is a clear example of overreaching regulation that does more harm than good. Next week, Sen. Landrieu and I will lead a bipartisan Gulf Coast delegation in fighting this proposed ban before it goes any further."

The Louisiana oyster industry currently employs 3,500 Louisianians and has an estimated \$318 million impact on the state.

Last year, there were more than 87 million cases of food-related illnesses, 371,000 hospitalizations and 5,700 deaths. However, only 15 individuals with pre-existing conditions died from eating raw oysters last year.

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